

INCIDENT AT NOON

On the morning of Thursday, Jan. 5, a week before first semester finals, a trio of Naval officers, a recruiting team from Dallas which regularly visits college campuses, set up a booth in the lobby of the Union. They were dressed in the Navy's gold-braided dark Class A uniforms and each wore the gold wings of Naval pilots.

Their booth was embellished with a recruiting poster and brochures explaining the Navy's pilot-training and flight program. Later in the morning some members of the OU chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society, after following the procedure laid down by the Union Business Office, set up their own booth in the lobby, only about six feet from the Navy recruiting booth. (These "booths" vary from tables and chairs to a taller but narrow sort of counter affair, standing about three feet tall. Both the Navy and the SDS were using the latter.) The purpose of the SDS booth was two-fold: to protest American policy in Vietnam and to gather donations for the treatment of Vietnamese children who have been burned by U.S. napalm. The charity is sponsored through the League for Responsible Action which gives the average cost at \$20,000 per child.

(The SDS is a national organization of the "New Left," and its local chapter is probably the most active political group on campus. Its members have participated in the civil rights movement, but their most recent project has been "campus reform," aimed at more responsibility for the individual student and an end to the *in loco parentis* concept. Membership in the rather loosely organized group varies from 25 to 50, but the publicity it has received belies its size. SDS is usually quite militant and outspoken in its opposition to the U.S. position in Vietnam, and the Union booth was not the first it had established on this particular issue.)

The SDS booth was topped by a hand-lettered sign hung from the ceiling. The sign read "Join the System Here to Commit War Crimes" and an arrow attached to it pointed in the direction of the Navy booth. Photo-

graphs of crippled, wounded, and burned Vietnamese children from the January issue of Ramparts magazine were also hung on the SDS sign, and a group of members, from three to five generally, stationed themselves in the booth to collect donations and discuss the Vietnam War. The booth immediately received a great deal of attention from students passing through the Union during the 10 o'clock break, one of the busiest hours for the Terrace Room and Will Rogers Cafeteria. The ebb and flow of students around the booth increased through the next hour, with the early clusters of debate growing into a congested mass of 200 students at a point during the noon hour. Throughout the morning, the discussions were often heated and emotional, with epithets continually hurled at the SDS members. There were taunts of "Cowards," "Homosexuals," "Commies," "Throw a bomb in there," "Get out of the U.S." by students. At various times some tried to tear down the sign, and one attempted to burn it. A couple of members of the Young Americans for Freedom, a student organization of the Right, put up their own hand-lettered sign between the SDS and Navy booths, quoting Time magazine's figures on deaths of Vietnamese attributed to the National

Liberation Front (Viet Cong). The shoving and yelling threatened to get out of hand shortly before 1 p.m., and culminating the disorder was a young man who said he was a Cuban refugee and who pushed through the throng of people surrounding the SDS booth, shouted "You are Communists!", grabbed one of the SDS members by the shirt, shook him, then ripped down the sign, and tore it in two. A riot was imminent as the students around the booth became more and more angry and destructive. Other SDSers were struck in the melee, and at 12:55 campus police stepped in, dispersed the students, and closed the booth.

"I was frightened. I mean I was really scared," said Robyn Moore, a Del City coed and a member of SDS. "The crowd was very angry at us; I've never experienced anything like it." Said another: "I have never seen so much hate and hostility. You could actually feel it." In defending the the sign, John Ratliff, another SDS member, said he felt that if the Navy has the right to recruit people to kill and destroy, the SDS had the right to condemn its booth as a manifestation of the entire war machine. Another SDS member disagreed. Said Mike Wright: "I think the sign was obnoxious and kept the booth from fulfilling the primary purpose of collecting money for the kids." Dr. Jodie Smith, dean of student services, said: "The end result was very unfortunate because the situation went from verbal

Photo by Dave Dryden

Clinched fists reveal flaring tempers at the SDS booth in the Union. Violence followed.



to physical." The booth was cancelled for the remainder of the day. (An interesting sidelight to the disturbance was the escalated activity that the Navy booth enjoyed. It appeared that some students were so stirred by the debate that they became interested in the Navy program. The recruiting booth was never more busy than this Thursday.)

The next week the SDS set up another booth in the Union lobby, on the spot where the Navy had been, and again at noon the area became clogged with students engaging in heated arguments. Dr. William R. Brown, dean of men, stepped in and suggested that all move to Meacham Auditorium where they could continue to discuss their position in more comfort and less hindrance to others. All parties agreed, and a number of from 50 to 100 came and went during the rest of the afternoon in Meacham. The discussions there were conducted in a more unemotional, serious vein and were much more successful.

The Jan. 5 incident, as might be expected, received a large play in state newspapers and on television, gener-

ating comment from many sources. One of the more significant viewpoints was expressed in an Oklahoma Daily editorial by its spring semester editor Susan Waltz. In it she wrote: "... The eyes of newsmen and citizens all over the nation are focused on us at OU as we cope with the liberal ideas that are sweeping college campuses all over the United States. Will we end up like Berkeley with a reputation built on tales of mob violence? Will we display the passivity of students at other schools who are content to let their college administrations rule with an iron hand, turning away controversial speakers and shrouding the campus from contact with the stimulating and liberal ideas of their generation? Or will we broaden our horizons enough to contemplate the controversial ideas being presented to us?

"It is this last possibility that should serve as the basis for our goal for the next semester: to make our university a peaceful meeting place of ideas, a meeting place for growing minds seeking wisdom and maturity. Note the word peaceful. It is here the challenge lies, and here where we as

individuals must begin to work. If we are so wrapped up in our ideas or our cause that we cannot consider an opposing idea, then we have not gained maturity. And an immature person, coping with big ideas often relies upon emotional outbursts to drive home his point. And emotional outbursts lead to violence—or riots.

"Ideally we came to college to learn, and the only way to learn is by being exposed to a variety of thoughts, by being forced to make a choice between opposing ideas. It would be easy to sit back and accept the teachings of our parents, friends, and teachers without considering alternative ideas. It would be easy to accept the safety of a world where we are told what to believe and what to do. . . . Our personal battle for broader viewpoints is symbolic of the battles raging on nearly every college campus. And our success in dealing with the problem may be indicative of the results of the overall struggle—whether or not the ideas of the minority will be trampled into oblivion, whether or not the apathy, for which college students are famous, will reign over initiative. . . ."

campus notes

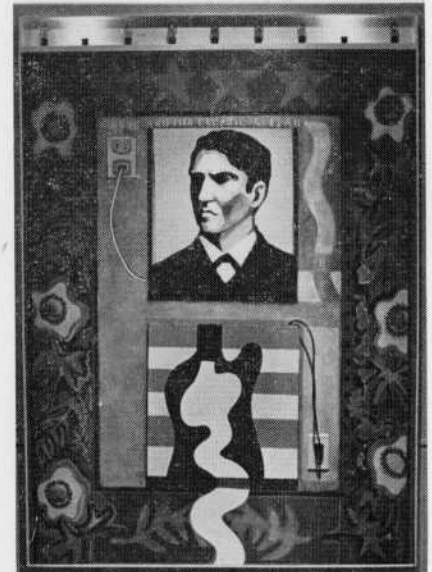
Continued from page 3

that can produce anything from a sophisticated wind tunnel to 400 special mousetraps, a photographic and art services department, and a reproduction department. In essence, the institute can help the faculty member (or an industry, too) write a proposal for a research contract and then administer the funds once they are received. Among the projects currently under way at OU is zoologist Cluff Hopla's ecology and epidemiology survey of an Arctic area, valued at \$500,000. Another is being conducted by Dr. C. M. Slipevich, Research professor of engineering, on flame weapons, valued at \$130,000. Both are under contract from the Department of Defense. Other projects are Dr. Robert Bell's anthropology study on the Short Mountains, funded at \$35,000 by the National Park Service, and \$17,000 Public Health Service project by chemistry professor Dr. Jordan Bloomfield. Close contact with Tinker AFB and the Oklahoma City Materiel Area is assured through several OU contracts. Among them is a \$108,000 project—"Oxidation-Corrosion and Thermal Fatigue Studies on Coated and Uncoated Super Alloys"—conducted by John Ray, adjunct instructor in aerospace and mechanical engineering. Close contact is also maintained with Fort Sill and the Army. The OURI operates a Field Artillery Research Office there with eight employees, six of whom are

mathematicians. Research and analysis in problems pertaining to artillery are conducted on the post.

Perhaps the most significant projects being conducted in Oklahoma, however, are those that include cooperative efforts by both OU and OSU. Among these cooperative projects is the development of a state plan under contract from the state industrial development and parks department. The plan, to include all phases of state government, will be a four-phased three-to-five-year effort and will involve faculty members on both campuses and whatever outside consultation is necessary. A second cooperative effort activity also involves the state universities of Arkansas and Missouri. Called Ozarks Unlimited, it was established under terms of the Economic Development Act of 1965 and will tackle regional problems. A third joint activity, the establishment of an Economic Development Center, has been funded for \$120,000 initially and includes the state industrial development and parks department. Its purpose will be to develop the economic and manufacturing strength of the state. "The 90-mile distance between the OU and OSU campuses is not a barrier," says Mr. Kennedy. "Among OU, the OU medical center, and OSU we have a close-knit research effort." The OURI director does not think the creation of more research facilities in the state would be in the best interests of Oklahoma. "Does Okla-

homa need more bricks and mortar or should we exploit the capabilities we already have?" he asks. Part of these capabilities are plain to see on the University's North Campus in Norman.



One of the 40 works contributed by 33 art professors from OU, OSU, and TU for the Twelfth Tri-College Exhibition shown at the University during January was the above "Thomas Edison and His Electric Guitar" by OU's John Hadley. The exhibition is the first of seven scheduled for showing at the Museum of Art during the second semester, concluded by the year's outstanding works created by art students May 14-June 4.